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THE

Lord Belhaven's Speech

In Parliament, the 15th day of November
1706, on the Second Article of the
Treaty.

My Lord Chancellor,

Your Lordship may Remember the last day,
when we had under Consideration, whether
to proceed to the *Fourth* or *Second Article*,
That I did Witness my Concern and Resentment,
to find so many Honourable and Worthy Members
of this House, so forward to finish the Demands
of *England*, in this Treaty; without taking Notice
of any one Article, that could be properly said to
relate to the Demands of *Scotland*.

Now, that we are entered upon the *Second Article*, I
desire to be resolved in one *QUESTION*, *What are*
the Motives, that should engage us to take England's Suc-
cessor upon their own Terms? Is it not strange, that
no *ANSWER* should be given to this Question,
save that, *When you come to consider the rest of the Ar-*
ticles, you shall be satisfied on that Demand? This is a
new way of Arguing, *My Lord*, a Method without
Precedent, ranversing Nature; and looks more like

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Design than Fair-Dealing. I profess, I think the huge and Prodigious Rains, that we have had of late, have either drowned out, or found out another Channel for *Reasoning*, than what was formerly; for by what I can see by this *New Method*, the Agreeing to the *First* Article, shall be found a sufficient Reason, why we should agree to the *Second*, and the Agreeing to the *Second* for the *Third*, and so for all.

If there was ever such a Farce acted; if ever Reason was *Hudibras'd*, this is the time: consult all the Treaties since the beginning of the World to this day, and if you can find any one Precedent, I shall yield the Cause.

I shall Instance, *My Lord*, one for all, and that is, The first and worst Treaty that ever was set on foot for Mankind; and yet, I am sorry to say it, there appears more Ingenuity in it, than in our Procedure: When the *Serpent* did Deceive our Mother *Eve*, he propos'd three Advantages, before he presum'd to Advise her to *Eat the forbidden Fruit*: The *First* was, taken from the *Sight*, the *Second* from the *Taste*, and the *Third* from the *Advantage* following thereupon. That from the *Sight*, was inforced by a *Behold, how lovely and comely a thing it is, it's pleasant to the Eye*. That from the *Taste*, from a Perswasion, that it was Good for Nourishment, *it's good for Food*. That from the *Advantage*, it will *make you wise, ye shall be as the Gods*; therefore, upon all these Considerations, *Eat*.

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Allow me, *My Lord*, to run the Parallel of this, with Relation to our Procedure in this *Treaty*.

Upon the first Account that our Nation had, of the *Treaty's* being finished betwixt the two Nations, People appeared all generally very well satisfied, as a thing that would tend to the Removal of all Jealousies, and the settling a good Understanding betwixt the two Kingdoms. But so soon as the *Articles of the Treaty* appeared in Print, the very Sight of them, made such a Change, as is almost inconceivable; they were so far from being pleasant to the Eye, *My Lord*, that the Nation appears to abhor them.

One would think, *My Lord*, That it had been the Interest of those who are satisfied with the Thing, to have gone immediately into the Merits of these particular Articles which relate to *Scotland*, and to have said, 'Gentlemen, be not afrighted with their ugly Shape, they are better than they are bonny; 'Come, Taste, come make a narrow Search and Inquiry, they are good for *Scotland*, the wholesomest Food that a Decaying Nation can take: You shall find the Advantages, you shall find a Change of Condition, you shall become Rich immediately; 'you shall be like the *English*, the most Flourishing and Richest People of the Universe.

But our Procedure, *My Lord*, hath been very far from the Prudence of the *Serpent*; for all our Arguments have run upon this blunt Topick, *Eat, swallow*

down this *Incorporating Union*, tho it please neither Eye nor Taste, it must go over : You must believe your Physicians, and we shall consider the Reasons for it afterwards.

I wish, *My Lord*, That our Loss be not in some small manner Proportionable to that of our First Parents, they thought to have been Incorporate with the Gods : But in place of that, they were justly Expelled Paradise, Lost their Sovereignty over the Creatures, and were forced to Earn their Bread with the Sweat of their Brows.

My Lord Chancellor, I have heard a Proposal, made from the other Side by the Marquis of *Ammandale* ; That in place of Agreeing to this *Second Article*, wherein the Succession is to be Declared, as a Consequence of our being United to *England* in one Kingdom, we should immediately go to Intail our Crown upon the Illustrious Family of *Hannover*, upon such Conditions and Limitations as are in our own Power to make, for the Security of our Sacred and Civil Concerns. I think, This is the Import of what his Lordship gave in, by a Resolve formerly, and hath told this Honourable House, That he thinks, he acts Consequentially to his Former declared Principles, and that this is now the only Measure, which can settle and secure the Peace and Quiet of this Nation, & fix a Firm Security for the Protestant Interest, and a perfect Understanding betwixt the two Nations.

I have also heard a Discourse, by his Grace the Duke

Duke of *Hamilton*, shewing, That ever since his Grace had the Honour to be a Member of this Honourable House, he had made it his Business to serve the Sovereign and his Nation faithfully and honestly, without any By-ends, By-views, or Self-Interest ; That before the Affair of the Succession was Tabled in *Scotland*, he had endeavoured to promote the Interest of his Nation, by Good Laws, and by the best Counsels he was capable to give, for rectifying Things amiss, and advancing the solid Interest of his Country ; That since the Affair of the Succession came to be Considered, he could never give himself the Liberty to believe, but that previous to any Settlement, we ought to have had such Condescensions with Relation to Trade and Commerce from *England*, as might Retrive the Losses the Nation hath sustained from them, ever since the Union of the Two Crowns under one Sovereign ; and that thereupon, to prevent all Faction and Party in the Treating of an Affair of such Importance, he had freely left the Nomination of the Lords Commissioners to Her Majesty, and wishes the Choice had been Answerable to his Design : But none can accuse him as Bargaining for himself, since he has no Reason to Complain of the Breach of any Stipulation upon that Head ; That now having Considered the Articles of this Treaty lying before us, and the Fatal Consequences that may follow upon the Finishing

of an Incorporating Union with *England*, with the general *Aversion* that appears by the *Addresses* from the several *Shires* of the *Kingdom*, and particularly from the *Address* of the *Commission* of the *General Assembly*, and of the *Royal Burrows* of *Scotland*; he finds it necessary to alter his Thoughts of that Matter, That he was none of these who loved to keep Things Loose and in Confusion; He had an Estate in both Kingdoms, and therefore it was not to be supposed, he would make use only of a Treaty, to throw out the Succession one time; and of the Succession, to throw off the Treaty another time. Therefore to prevent worse Consequences, he is content, That in this Parliament, the Succession be Declared and Settled upon the Illustrious Princess *Sophia Electorefs* of *Hannover* and the Heirs of Her Body, upon such Conditions and Limitations as shall be found necessary by this Parliament, to secure our Civil Rights and Liberties, the Independency and Sovereignty of the Nation, and the Presbyterian Government of this Church, as it is Founded upon the *Claim of Right*, and Established by Law, and whose Privileges and Settlement he Resolves to Support with the Outmost of his Power.

And therefore, his Grace thinks himself Obligated with all Humility in this present Juncture of Affairs, to address himself particularly to His Grace My Lord Commissioner, and to beg of his Grace, That he would
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be pleas'd to acquaint Her Majesty with the True State of the Nation, and with the Proposal made for Allaying the present Ferment and Settling a Solid Peace and Good Understanding betwixt Her Two Kingdoms, and that a small Recess may be granted in the mean time, till Her Majesty's Gracious Answer come, which with all Submission he conceives will prevent these Bad Consequences, that the further Pushing on of this Treaty may occasion. I think, *My Lord*, this is materially what his Grace said, tho' not so fully nor so well expressed.

Now, *My Lord*, it remains, that I give Account of my self and of my own Opinion of this Affair: All who know me, *My Lord*, know that I have been from the beginning on a Revolution foot; I ventured my Life and Fortune with the First, and I have ever since acted Consequentially to my Principle. It's true I was never a good Courtier under any Reign; because I had a Rule for my Obedience; and never made Obedience my Rule; my Reputation was never stained, Nor had I ever any Reproach laid upon me, save when I was brought in, head over ears, in a SCOTS PLOT, *A Plot, very well known, design'd to blast the Reputation of a Set of People, the best affected to the Sovereign, and to the true Interest of their Nation, that ever Scotland bred.* What my Opinion was with Relation to the Succession is very well known also, I lookt upon Limitations with another

ther Eye, than some others were pleased to do, I was far from Treating them in Ridicule, because as all Human Affairs, they are lyable to Alterations, and might be taken off: that Argument proves too much, and Consequently proves nothing at all. Should a Man refuse to have a good Estate settled upon him, because he may squander it away, and become Bankrupt? Must a Good Law be refused, because it may afterwards be Repealed? No, *My Lord*. Where the Power is lodged in our selves, we have all Human Security Imaginable for the Thing; It is not so, where the Power is lodged in others: therefore I shall alwise Choose that Security, which depends upon my self, preferable to any other.

This, *My Lord*, hath Confirmed me, That Limitations of our own making is the best Security; tho I alwise thought them not the Full, of what we merited, for the going into the *English* Succession. For Considering the Injuries, that we have received from them, we ought to have Reparation upon this Emergent: and I think without Incorporating with them, they might have given us some small Incouragement in our Trade with them, which would have been profitable unto us, & no manner of way prejudicial unto them, as I can clearly Demonstrate, if there be Occasion for it. But since this is not the proper Place nor Season for such Proposals, I shall go in with the Proposal made by the Marquis of *Annandale*, and fortified by his Grace the Duke of *Hamilton*; because I think, it is the best that we can make of it at this time, the fittest Measure to prevent Civil Wars, alay the Ferment of the Nation and far preferable to *this Incorporating Union*, which as to us in all it's Clauses appears to be Most Unreasonable.

